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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL
Rice: We Have Protected Europeans from Terror Attacks - Sabah
Rice Defends US Terror Policies - Star
John McCain: Turkey Won't Accept a Kurdish State in Northern Iraq - Sabah
Rumsfeld Blames Turkey Again - Milliyet
Gul Urges EU to Keep Pledges on Turkish Cyprus - Milliyet
Saddam Turns into a Militant at Court - Milliyet
Saddam Show, Part 3 - Vatan
Baradei: Tehran Can Produce Nukes in a Few Months - Aksam
Suicide Attack in Netanya: 5 Killed - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Rice: Europe Knew about Transfer of Suspects - Radikal
Rice: CIA Intelligence Saved European Lives - Yeni Safak
CIA Tortures Suspects to Death on Planes - Yeni Safak
Poll: European Businessmen Want Turkey in EU - Yeni Safak
'Moderate Islam' Summit in Mecca - Cumhuriyet
Saddam's Counsel Leaves Court Room - Zaman
Ramsey Clark: Saddam Trial Will Divide Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Russia to Sell 1 Billion USD of Weapons to Iran - Cumhuriyet
Nazabayev Wins Kazakh Presidency by 91 Percent of Votes - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

US: Greek Orthodox Patriarchate is Ecumenical: The US administration declared on Monday that they consider the Istanbul-based Greek Orthodox Patriarchate to be 'ecumenical,' and see Patriarch Bartholomew I as 'a religious leader of global standing,' papers report. US State Spokesman Sean McCormack said in a statement that the US took very seriously the issue of religious freedom in Turkey. 'As illustrated in the 2005 International Religious Freedom Report, concerns highlighted in the report are issues related to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, including the reopening of the Halki seminary, as well as issues related to other religious minorities in Turkey,' McCormack said. McCormack added that President Bush had urged the reopening of Halki Seminary during a meeting with Prime Minister Erdogan in June. Halki Seminary on Heybeli Island in the Sea of Marmara was founded in the 1700s to train orthodox clergymen, and was closed in 1971 during a Turkish military takeover, following a Constitutional Court decision to nationalize all private religious high schools.

Sunnis to Join Iraqi Politics: "Milliyet" reports that Sunni groups are expected to join the new administration of Iraq after December 15 elections in an effort to strike a balance against the Shiites and Kurds. The paper expects this move by the Sunnis to help block separatist demands in Iraq. Ankara arranged a meeting of Iraqi Sunni groups in Istanbul over the weekend. US Iraq Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad joined the Sunnis' meeting on Sunday. Sunnis asked the US to suspend operations, release prisoners and announce a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq. The two sides agreed that elections will be monitored by

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international and Sunni observers. Sunnis will be represented in election commissions and among ballot observers and Iraqis living abroad will be allowed to join the legislative election this month. Ankara expects the compromise reached in Istanbul to reduce the power of the Shiites and Kurds in the Iraqi parliament and in state institutions, comments "Milliyet."

Sinop Radar Facilities Reactivated: The US radar station in Turkey's Black Sea coastal city of Sinop, an effective installation which has provided crucial information to the US secret intelligence service National Security Agency (NSA) during Cold War, has been reactivated, "Hurriyet" reports from Washington. The facility, refurbished with new technology, was reactivated following September 11, according to US intelligence sources. The Governor's office in Sinop denied the reports, saying that only some American families who have served in Sinop in the past came to the city for short vacations. 'There are no US troops inside the facilities,' said the Governor's Office.

Gonul in the US: Turkish Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul, in Washington to attend Southeastern European Defense Ministers (SEDM) meeting, told reporters after meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld that the US Administration must handle the issue of the terrorist PKK presence in northern Iraq, adding that Ankara was uneasy in the face of US reluctance to remove terrorists from Kandil Mountains. Gonul also said that a 255-man Turkish contingent in Afghanistan would join an international brigade to be established by southeastern European countries. During his stay in Washington, Gonul is to meet with executives of American-Turkish Council (ATC). SEDM meetings will be held on Tuesday with participation of Turkey, the United States, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia.

Buyukanit Visits the US: Visiting Turkish Land Forces Commander General Yasar Buyukanit will meet US military officials and 'neo-cons' from the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), "Vatan" reports. The paper says that Washington deems the Buyukanit visit important as it is

expected to shape US-Turkey military ties in 2006-2008. General Buyukanit is to become the chief of Turkish General Staff (TGS) in 2006.

FM Gul Due in Brussels for NATO Summit: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul is due in Brussels on December 8 to attend the Fall meeting of NATO foreign ministers.

Developments in the Greater Middle East region, security issues, NATO's role in Afghanistan and Kosovo will be taken up at the meeting, a statement by the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said on Monday. "Milliyet" says that Gul will not join a dinner of NATO-European Union foreign ministers later this week in protest of the failure of Europe to ease trade restrictions on the northern Cypriot enclave.

EU Report Criticizes Turkish Anti-Terror Bill: The EU Commission Representation in Turkey sent Brussels a report which said that the Turkish anti-terror bill contradicted democratization laws passed by Turkey, "Zaman" reports. The Turkish military played a key role in drafting the bill, says the report, adding that it can jeopardize the success of Turkey in adopting EU harmonization laws. It notes that the ruling AK Party government is working to adjust the demands of the nationalist bureaucracy and the nation with Copenhagen political criteria. The report says that according to the Turkish anti-terror draft, even individuals who have no links with terror organizations can be

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persecuted as terrorists. It underlines that people expressing their personal views can be penalized by courts for praising terrorism. This provision is seen as the biggest threat to basic rights and freedoms. According to the anti-terror bill, non-violent actions can also be branded as terrorism. The EU report warns that such provisions can be abused by the security forces and the judiciary. Individual rights have been seriously restricted in the anti-terror bill. There are also provisions granting extensive powers to security forces and administrative units, according to the EU report.

Turkey Condemns Suicide Attack in Israel: The Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) strongly condemned in a statement on Monday the suicide bomb attack on a mall entrance in Netanya in which four people were killed and more than 30 others were injured. 'This heinous attack was staged by groups which aim to hamper efforts for peace and stability in the region. Such attacks, in a period when Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and a part of West Bank has given rise to hopes for reviving the peace process, are extremely distressing. We call on both Israelis and Palestinians to act with common sense and not allow those groups to achieve their goals,' MFA said.

Erdogan Visits New Zealand: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, on a 10-day visit to New Zealand and Australia, met with his counterpart Helen Clark in Wellington. At a joint press conference on Monday, Clark said New Zealand will support any new UN initiative to bring about a settlement in Cyprus. Erdogan said New Zealand had pledged to support Turkey's bid to be given non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for 2009-2010. Turkey has not been a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in over 50 years despite its substantial contributions to peace and security, papers comment. Erdogan dismissed press reports that the tombs of Anzacs in Gallipoli have been damaged. 'On the contrary, we are trying to renovate the area in order to make it more attractive,' Erdogan said. Erdogan claimed that US attitudes toward terrorism had changed after September 11 attacks. 'Now the US regards all suspects as potential terrorists,' Erdogan said. The PM also invited New Zealander businessmen to invest in Turkey. Dailies report Turkish opposition parties as lashing out at Erdogan for spending most of his time abroad.

Aksu Reveals Terror Statistics: On Monday, Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu said in response to a motion submitted to the parliament that 966 terrorists have been arrested and 359 others killed in Turkey since 2003. Aksu added that 116 terrorists have been extradited to Turkey from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Greece, Azerbaijan and Ukraine.

Military the Most Reliable Institution in Turkey: A survey carried out by the Politics Center Association chaired by the ruling AK Party lawmaker Mahmut Kocak has shown that the army was seen as the most reliable institution in Turkey, "Milliyet" reports. 72 percent of the 1179 people surveyed in Ankara said they were not content with the activities of AKP, and 73 percent said there was no democracy in Turkish political parties. Support for the government is declining, says "Milliyet."

European Businessmen Back Turkey's EU Membership: In a survey of 1,500 European company executives, the vast majority support Turkish membership in the European Union while only nine percent oppose it, papers report. The UPS Europe Business Monitor poll of 1,500 executives in EU countries showed that resistance to Turkish membership was

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strongest among German and French business leaders. In late November, a survey conducted by TNS-Sofres for the 'Yalta European Strategy' in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and Britain showed that the number of Europeans opposing Turkey's EU membership has increased. Nearly 40 percent said they backed Turkey's EU membership while 46 percent rejected.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

"Iraq Goes Toward a Civil War"

Erdal Guven argued in the conservative "Tercuman" (12/6): "Iraq is rapidly moving toward a civil war since the Iraqi Kurds are reluctant to share oil reserves and there is no clear statement on the topic in the new constitution. The Shiite region of Iraq contains the largest natural gas reserves. Northern Iraq has the second largest. The Sunni region, on the other hand, is suffering from a lack of energy resources. Sunni Arabs who live in central Iraq without oil reserves, are disturbed by the prospect of the Kurdish federation controlling oil. Currently the Barzani administration arbitrarily distributes the use of northern oil reserves to foreign companies without even consulting with the central authority. Nacirvan Barzani, his cousin, said that oil belongs to the Kurds when an agreement was made between the KDP and a Norwegian oil company to drill for oil. A civil war between Sunni Arabs and the Kurds will be inevitable if the US does not revise the status of energy resources in Iraq."

"Turkey Intervenes in Iraq"

Cengiz Candar commented in the tabloid "Bugun" (12/6): "The recent Istanbul meeting between US Ambassador to Iraq Khalilzad and the Sunni leader Hashemi along with Turkish FM Gul was a diplomatic surprise. In a joint press conference, it was announced to the whole world that Iraqi Sunnis have agreed to participate in the upcoming elections. In other words, Turkey has achieved a major accomplishment by helping to achieve a consensus between the US and the Sunnis, who constitute the social root of the Iraqi insurgency. Both sides have asked Turkey to assume the role of witness. In fact, the consensus only covers certain Sunni groups since the Zarkavi and Ansar Al Islam linked Sunni groups were not part of this process. Yet there is something important for us: Turkey, or more specifically, the ruling government has been asked to play a facilitative role in the Iraq equilibrium and this request came from both the US as well as from some Sunni groups. Turkey is gradually assuming a proactive role in Iraq."

"Istanbul Initiative"

Sami Kohen observed in the mainstream daily "Milliyet" (12/6): "Will the Iraqi Sunnis participate in the upcoming elections? Will it actually be possible for the decisions taken at the Istanbul summit to be implemented? In the aftermath of the Istanbul summit hopes for the implementation have certainly increased. The agreement reached in Istanbul has three basic components: First, this agreement meets all the conditions of the Sunnis; such as, increasing the number of the observers of the election; and allowing the Sunnis residing in the neighboring countries, as well as the jailed ones, to participate in the elections. Second, the US has been asked to suspend its military operations to ensure a secure election atmosphere; and finally, some changes in the constitution will be made after the elections to ensure Iraq's stability in the process of reconstruction. Reaching such an agreement by Turkish diplomatic initiative is a beneficial development for all

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the parties, including Turkey. However, the leaders' agreement does not guarantee the success of this initiative. All the parties should exert efforts to implement these agreements. The only danger during this process is that militant groups may try to sabotage this political process. As we get close to December 15, no one can guarantee that such violent actions will not occur. Nevertheless, the Istanbul initiative strengthens the belief that the process will continue without such problems."

WILSON